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CHALLENGE

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FREE ANTIRACISTS TODAY, SMASH CAPITALISM TOMORROW

CHICAGO, January 20—"FREE THEM ALL! DROP THE CHARGES!" This was the main rallying cry heard in front of the Leighton Criminal Courthouse as over a dozen antiracist fighters braved freezing temperatures outside. Today marked the date of a court hearing for an antiracist fighter who was among the thousands attacked and charged by the racist capitalist state for their participation in a militant rebellion last year.

For nearly an hour, we led chants, gave short speeches, and picketed in front of the stairs leading into the bosses' racist criminal injustice center. Members of the communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) helped lead chants, held up anti-capitalist banners, and shared copies of CHALLENGE newspaper. Many drivers and workers passing by honked their horns or raised their fists in support.

Our rally today took on an even wider significance given that it was the inauguration of the latest fascist-in-chief, U.S. President Joe Biden. Those of us in PLP made it clear that no matter who holds the reins of power in the capitalist system, the attacks on our class are bound to continue. In the wake of the Donald Trump-led Small Fascist wing of the U.S. ruling class storming the Capitol building, the splits among the bosses and the racist contradictions of the system have been made even more apparent.

PLP has been honored to fight alongside our class within these worker and student-led struggles. The solidarity and collectivity shown in these fights, no matter the size, is what gives our class the confidence and training that we need to ultimately run an egalitarian communist world in the masses' collective interest.

The struggle expands

The newly created Chicago Activist Defense Committee (CADC) organized the action today. What originally started as an initiative to support Black artist/worker Jeremey "Mohawk" Johnson (see previous CHALLENGEs) after his arrest by the Chicago Police Department (CPD) during an anti-racist demonstration last August has grown into a wider network to support all those attacked by the capitalist state, citywide.

Adding more fuel to our fire is the clear racist double standard that was on display during the Capitol building siege on January 6th (see editorial on page 2). A mob of mainly white racists quickly overrun scant security forces and were allowed free reign to livestream their mayhem. To date, approximately 100 of those who participated have been arrested and face charges, compared to at least 3000 who were arrested in Chicago alone for fighting back against the racist murder of George Floyd.

As one CADC member put it, "A Black woman was shot to death for driving too close to the White House and our protests are met with extreme violence just for standing in the street and speaking out." Racist terror and exploitation are ingrained in this capitalist system!

Fight for a system that serves workers

One PL'er concluded, "We fight today to get our comrades freed and their charges dropped, but we must have no illusions that this capitalist legal system exists to serve us." We must continue fighting and winning others to defend and protect ourselves not only in the present, but also to build the mass PLP which represents the only force that can free us from the racist and sexist misery of capitalism. Let's keep fighting!

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

☆Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

☆The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

☆Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

☆While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

☆Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

☆Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

☆Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

☆Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☆Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

☆Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

In the fight between Fascists, liberal bosses still main danger

The insurrection in the U.S. Capitol was no one-off. It marked an explosion of the divisions in the U.S. ruling class that have simmered to a boil—and that point to even bloodier battles in the years to come. As U.S. imperialism spirals into decline and rival imperialists in China are poised to become the world's top-dog capitalist superpower, the U.S. bosses are falling out like the thieves they are. A subordinate but rising faction, the "America First" wing fronted by Donald Trump, is challenging the liberal finance capitalists who have ruled the globe since World War II.

This split can't be reconciled by a "democratic" election, the charade the bosses use to perpetuate their capitalist dictatorship. It won't be healed by Trump's leaving office in disgrace, or by the inauguration of liberal viper Joe Biden in the armed camp known as Washington, D.C. One side—most likely the finance capital liberals, who still have the upper hand—must smash the other.

In a time of fear, volatility, and a murderously mishandled pandemic, it's important to remember that the international working class has no dog in this fight. Both wings of the ruling class stand for fascism (see glossary, page 6). Both spell misery and death for the working class. Trump's Small Fascists are a nest of gutter racists and white nationalists funded by right-wing billionaires who make most of their money within the U.S. The liberal Big Fascists build their mountains of profits from genocidal wars, ruthless international exploitation, and vicious racist inequality.

Pushed to the edge, the finance capital liberals are building fascism with a multiracial cover, a few crumbs for the working class, and the rhetoric of fake compassion. After disciplining their own class, they'll demand "sacrifice" for their system and enlist workers to die in their next world war. Make no mistake, the Big Fascists are no lesser evil. As they grow more desperate, they will stop at nothing.

We live in a period with only two roads. One is imperialist war and full-blown fascism. The other is communist revolution. The task of Progressive Labor Party is to build a revolutionary communist movement to smash capitalism once and for all.

Small Fascists make inroads

Contrary to the myth of a grass-roots movement of alienated white workers, the Small Fascists are orchestrated and financed by the likes of the super-rich Koch and Mercer and DeVos families. A new group with deep pockets, the anti-tax and anti-regulation Club for Growth, "has emerged as one of the biggest backers of the Republican lawmakers who sought to overturn the U.S. election results" (The Guardian, 1/16). Assured of this financial support, 147 Republican members of Congress spit in the finance capital's face and challenged Biden's election the day after the Capitol attack. Nearly two hundred of them voted against impeaching Trump for inciting it.

The January 6 siege revealed the Small Fascist infiltration of the U.S. military and police forces around the country. Local police chiefs are turning their own people into the FBI (Washington Post, 1/16). Fearful of rogue elements in their ranks, the military was forced to conduct fresh background checks on National Guard troops sent to D.C. to safeguard the inauguration (defenseone.com 1/16).

Big Fascists are the main danger

For the first time, as the Small Fascist loyalists tried to disrupt the presidential election and kidnap and assassinate the opposition leadership, the U.S. ruling class was unable to impose a peaceful transition of power. Exposed and humiliated, the Big Fascist finance capitalists are struggling to regain control. Dozens of companies, including Marriott International, Dow, Airbnb, and Morgan Stanley, declared an end to donations to any member of Congress who voted to block Biden's victory (New York Times, 1/11). Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, a shameless opportunist who walked in lock step with Trump for the last four years, is now blaming the ex-president for the Capitol attack and suggesting he might support an impeachment conviction.

History shows that in periods of crisis, capitalists need to build fascism to survive. Since the pro-war liberals are best positioned to win the battle within the U.S. ruling class, they pose the greatest danger. The Big Fascists' response to 9/11, beyond the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, was to pass the Patriot Act. It created massive surveillance and a militarized police state that continues to terrorize mainly Black, Latin, and Muslim workers (Inthesetimes, 6/17/2020). Flash forward to Jim Crow Joe Biden and "Top Cop" Kamala Harris and their plan to unveil a domestic terrorism bill. While their immediate target may be the Small Fascist militias, the main wing bosses will ultimately use it against Black working-class leaders and antiracists.

To preserve their hold on power, the Big Fascists' strategy is to build a multiracial fascist movement. As Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, the leading Big Fascist think tank, recently wrote: [I]f America's differences are not to be the country's undoing, more young Americans must meet and work together with those of other classes, colors, religions, and backgrounds' (foreignaffairs.com, 1/11).

Haass's solution? A new system of voluntary national service—a first step toward a compulsory draft for the coming war with China.

Drive toward war accelerates

Over the long term, the intensifying U.S. civil war can only benefit the Chinese ruling class, which looks increasingly stable and strong by comparison. As the world's regional bosses are forced to choose sides, many of them—especially in Africa, the fastest-growing economy in the world—are looking more and more toward China.

"Signs of this are already evident in...the European Union's investment treaty with China [and] the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership trade bloc in Asia" (foreignaffairs.com, 1/12). As the U.S. finance capitalists see their empire imploding, they have a powerful incentive to go to war before it's too late.

The future can be shaped by our class

With the rulers sharpening their long knives against one another, there's one big unanswered question: How will workers respond to the movement toward war and fascism? The greatest danger for our class is that a large section of workers will be terrorized into running into the arms of the Big Fascists. But we cannot forget that Biden, Pelosi, and the rest are the same racists who generated the 1994 mass incarceration crime bill (authored by Biden himself), mass impoverishment welfare reform, and countless coups and wars that have slaughtered millions of workers around the world.

We call on workers to reject the liberal bosses and their sham democracy with the same force that they reject open fascists like Trump. The solution to smashing the fascist menace is communism, a state run by and for workers. As a class and as a communist party, we must build a revolutionary movement to destroy capitalism once and for all. Join Progressive Labor Party!✪

Racist capitalism killed my patient

LOS ANGELES, January 5—On New Year's Eve, I got news that my patient of more than five years had died of complications from Covid-19 two days ago. He called me just three days before he passed and was exhausted with speaking due to shortness of breath. The best I could do at the moment was encourage him to remain calm and stay on his oxygen. He was hospitalized at Martin Luther King Community Hospital which is currently overrun by Covid-19 cases.

I am heartbroken on getting the news of his passing and have mixed emotions on what more I could have done. I called a physician-friend I know who works there to get her take on his situation but to also get a firsthand account on the conditions for healthcare workers and its impact on the quality of patient care.

She looked into his case and informed me that he developed pneumonia with sepsis that led to organ failure. His family had made him "DNR" (Do Not Resuscitate) and after two days removed his life support. She lauded the doctors and nursing staff of their medical and intensive care teams and said that while they are working in terrible conditions, "I have never worked under [worse conditions] in my entire life," she assured me the quality of care has not yet been impacted in any major ways. She felt confident that while tragic, there was nothing more the MLK medical team could have done for my patient.

What followed, however, was more disturbing.

Death panel protocols

She mentioned MLK hospital was thinking about implementing plans to ration care and that "Death Panel" protocols have been developed. She was furious at the hospital bosses for even considering this of their medical teams when there is currently no county-wide coordination between hospitals and said, "I refused to deny care for my patients while resources in hospitals in Santa Monica or in West LA remain available!" She said, "They'll get my resignation letter first!"

However, many hospitals in LA County are already reporting their ICU's effectively full and as of last week the county had one percent of their beds available and the current surge is only expected to worsen in January. Hospitals are now discharging severely ill patients home sooner than they normally would. Ambulance services are being told to restrict the transportation of patients whose hearts have stopped and can only transport to the hospital if they've successfully resuscitated the patient out in the field. In other words, patients will be left to die in ambulances or at home (LA Times 1/4/2021). Clearly, the move to fascist "Death Panels" is

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Tenants & antiracists organize vs evictions, expose slumlords

Class struggle and multiracial unity is our only defense, not the liberal bosses

MARYLAND, January 20—Just a week before the finance capital wing of the ruling class gathered to celebrate Jim Crow Joe Biden's inauguration, a working-class family was set to face eviction charges.

As soon as the family received the notice, members of the Mount Rainier Organizing for Racial Equality (MORE) and Progressive Labor Party (PLP) promptly began organizing assistance for their working-class brothers and sisters. Step one was creating and distributing flyers outlining tenant's rights explaining that only working-class unity can protect us from bosses' criminal capitalism.

The family faced challenges that so many working class families suffer under capitalism: the father is currently unemployed, the mother is six months pregnant, with two children requiring medical assistance and limited means to provide health insurance, food, or shelter. As the family struggled to protect themselves, they were faced with a rent increase in October amidst a deadly pandemic.

They live in the Heritage Park Apartments (HPA), owned by Dreyfuss Property Management (DPM), a large complex with seven rental buildings and condos, in addition to 33 other buildings in the Maryland area.

In November, just a month after they raised rents on HPA tenants DPM purchased another set of buildings to the tune of $15 million is the way of capitalism, profit is primary as bosses threaten the lives of working-class families.

Working-class fightback is our only protection

As members of MORE and PLP were alerted to the eviction notices, they wasted no time organizing. Comrades quickly gathered information on the family's necessary healthcare, delivered food, money for supplies, and set up meetings with the family to begin organizing other HPA tenants.

PLP members active in the tenant struggle stressed to their base that all workers deserve decent housing, which cannot be achieved as long as housing is part of the capitalist profit-making system. A communist system, ensuring the fundamental needs for all workers, is the only acceptable alternative to racist landlords with extortionate rent and cold calculating evictions.

Once meetings were organized, the collective printed flyers and joined with Prince George's County Tenants Defense and Prince George's County Mutual Aid to canvass the HPA apartments.

Sustained struggle until revolution

PLP members have joined with other fighters from several small groups and neighborhoods to push forward in preparation for many more evictions as pandemic protections disappear. Since the summer of 2020 there have been two rallies to stop evictions and several organizing efforts in Prince George's County, Maryland. The rallies have been integrated, including speeches in both english and spanish. In one instance a mainly Latin group, CASA, held rent strikes in Langley Park and ultimately negotiated terms with landlords.

This, however, is just the start. Under capitalism there's always more to the bosses' games. In Mount Rainier, a PLP member discovered that federal money for rent assistance was not being advertised or used.

In response, MORE reached out to the tenants throughout December and organized to have workers sign up for the available assistance. In that one month of organizing more people signed up for assistance than had in the previous three months.

At LaSalle Apartments in Chillum groups canvassed and organized zoom meetings with residents and held a rally on a chilly, snowy day in December. The hotline for mutual aid has connected with residents who are being threatened with evictions and other rental needs.

Landlords use and abuse the laws

Tenant organizing has introduced our collective to the ways so many of these slumlords benefit from their capitalist crimes and are never held accountable for the lives they ruin.

Under the current rent moratoriums it is "illegal" for landlords to raise rents or to evict residents for non-payment of rent. Meanwhile the "rental assistance" programs by the government forced residents to apply for money that went into the pockets of the landlords. Some landlords took the money but still threatened evictions.

Unless a worker breaks or ends their lease a landlord legally cannot evict them until they file in court and the tenant has the chance to appear. Still many landlords are threatening workers and evicting them illegally.

Housing courts have been closed for rental evictions but residents are afraid and often vacate their homes before getting evicted for fear of long term damages to their credit rating or their ability to regain decent housing in the future. These are symptoms so unique to capitalism and should be smashed.

Communist revolution is the only solution

We will continue to work with the multiracial group MORE and local residents to protect tenants but there are limits to this fight.

As we strengthen our understanding that class struggle, not liberal politicians or reform movements, are the way forward, we have armed ourselves and our friends with copies of CHALLENGE. It is only with revolution against the capitalist class that we can secure a path to workers' power.

The enormity of the challenges facing our brothers and sisters during this capitalist crisis can be overwhelming. But stepping forward to rely on each other, fighting racism, encouraging discussions over a communist egalitarian future, and taking on the bosses with intensified class struggle, can move our class towards the solidarity needed for victory.

Many of the people we have been engaging with have been won to the Party's ideas and are considering joining this long but necessary fight. We will continue to distribute CHALLENGE and organize until revolution is won.

Fight For Communism, Power To The Workers!✪

‘Soup joumou’ nourishes workers with communist ideas

HAITI, January 1—The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in Haiti organized its annual solidarity soup in two working-class neighborhoods in a provincial town. Many people had the opportunity to drink the cauldrons of traditional January 1 independence pumpkin soup (soup joumou) with us. The tradition celebrates the victory of the revolutionaries of Haitian independence in 1804 over racism, slavery and colonialism, and therefore against the domination and exploitation of capitalism. To share the soup of independence is therefore to say no to capitalism and yes to communism.

Capitalism: the Haitian working class’worst nightmare

This year, the socio-economic situation marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, the rise of the dollar on the foreign exchange market, kidnapping, gang wars, etc., has shocked the working masses. For some families, it would have been impossible to drink the traditional soup, as evidenced by the pleas of many people asking Party comrades if “there will be the solidarity soup for this year.”

There has been a surge in insecurity throughout Haiti: theft, rapes, assassinations and kidnappings all add to the daily burden on the workers. Poverty continues to increase, we are in need of everything, mainly the subsistence minimum. About 60 percent of the population is food insecure—the bosses’ sanitized term that means hungry—with a high percentage severely food insecure—starving. The unemployment rate, for its part, cannot even be quantified. One could ask, “How do they manage to stay alive, these Haitian workers who have no access to health care, electricity or even drinking water?” Despair is written in big letters on the faces of the people you meet in the streets.

we promote mutual aid and sharing by putting into practice the communist idea of ‘from each according to commitment, to each according to need.’

With mass misery at its height, and corruption and crime well established, the rulers are implementing a dictatorship worthy of the monarchies and aristocracies of past centuries. Executions, militias, federations of gangs: they have installed terror in all forms. The ruling class, for its part, wages war through groups of armed gangs in working-class neighborhoods. It’s a mess. The race for profit never ceases to craze those in power, or those who long to usurp power.

Life is becoming cheaper for the bosses, who try every which way to topple anything that stands in their way. The working class without communist leadership wanders among the tumult of power struggles. Everything is scarce for workers, everything except death!

Working class solidarity illuminates dark night

PLP, our international communist party, understands the suffering and peril of the working classes of the world. Alongside workers in struggle, from near and afar, we participate in and promote the concept of mutual aid and sharing, of putting into practice the communist idea of “from each according to commitment, to each according to need.” It is an awareness of our equality as a class. As proof, our comrades and friends in the U.S. and in Paris, France, even in their coronavirus isolation, have contributed financially to our solidarity soup.

Long live sharing, long live solidarity, long live the class struggle. Communism is the future of our world. Let's join PLP to build it.✪

Fight the capitalist system that killed my patient

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likely to become a reality.

In addition, the LA Times (1/2) has run a series of articles on MLK Hospital that illustrate how the pre-pandemic day-to-day lives and underlying health conditions of Black and Latin workers are creating “a crisis on top of a crisis….Many residents live in dense, multigenerational housing, work essential jobs and suffer from secondary health conditions due to a lifelong, systemic lack of access to quality primary care.”

Chief Medical Officer John Fisher said:

I describe our healthcare system as separate and unequal and we have a community here that is a reflection of that. We’re all Black and Brown, low income, almost all publicly insured, and really lack the access to healthcare that other communities have. Because of that, we are being hit hard — harder than every other community — by Covid.

My patient was a middle-aged Black man living with HIV and hypertension that was otherwise well controlled. Studies currently suggest that living with HIV and having an otherwise stable immune system poses no greater risk for Covid-19 than non-HIV infected individuals. Having said that, he worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant in a hospital also with rampant Covid-19 cases. His job as an “essential worker” is likely the source of his exposure. In either case, his reality of being a Black worker from Compton in a racist, capitalist system is what killed him.

Sad, angry, but not helpless

While it may be true that it’s the underlying racist conditions that are leading to the high diagnosis and death rates of Covid-19 in Black and Latin communities, MLK Community Hospital is also to blame for being overrun by the virus. When it was rebuilt and opened in 2015, its number of medical beds declined by more than 100 (131 down from 233) and it now lacks the trauma center it once had.

Originally born out of the Watts rebellions of 1965, this current hospital, while staffed by committed healthcare workers putting their lives on the line , is a skeleton of its former self and under-resourced(Politico 11/8/2017).

In the LA Times piece (1/2), one of the ICU doctors said, “For a hospital already struggling under the weight of one healthcare crisis, the patients here are particularly helpless in this battle.”

That’s how my patient and so many other Black, Latin, immigrant and poor working class people are left by a system only concerned with profits. While I am deeply saddened, I am also angry and certainly don’t feel helpless.

Mass work leads the way

I currently work in a mass organization that has been fighting against racist incarceration and organizing healthcare workers, which has been written about in CHALLENGE. We have been building ties with families whose loved ones have been killed by the KKKops, and are getting to know the sister of Nicholas Burgos who was murdered by LA County Sheriffs at Harbor UCLA hospital in October of last year.

I’m talking about my patient and the circumstances surrounding his death with coworkers and friends because only our growth and movement to overthrow capitalism can ever avenge his death and so many others killed by this system.

My patient was deeply loved by family, friends and coworkers. On his social media there are countless messages of shock and sadness. One coworker wrote,

If you work in a hospital you know that your coworkers can quickly turn to family. When you work with people for long 12+ hour shifts dealing with critically ill patients and situations unlike any other work place, a special type of bond is formed. He was just an all-around cool person, one of the most generous, friendly and funny people I've known. He was able to connect with patients, make them feel comfortable, care for them and make them (and me) laugh on a daily basis. He was an amazing caregiver in every sense of the word and risked his life to save others. You're a hero in my book and we'll never forget you.

The bosses took one more of our loved ones and will continue to until we rise up. Healthcare workers need to fight for the lives of our patients, fight for access to vaccinations, refuse their racist “death panels” and join us to build for communist revolution and overthrow this pathological system once and for all!✪

No honor among thieves

Turkey grows closer to U.S. rivals, war ahead

Is the transcontinental country of Turkey an ally or a rival to U.S. imperialists? New President Joe Biden's choice for secretary of state Antony Blinken declares Turkey is acting more like a betrayer: "The idea that a strategic, so-called strategic, partner of ours would actually be in line with one of our biggest strategic competitors in Russia is not acceptable" (Daily Sabah, 1/20).

Turkey—cozying up with Russia and China and destabilizing its solid alliance with the U.S.-aligned world order—is a house of cards. Any of these capitalist players can incite war.

We have no stake in the bosses' bloody games for profit and power. From Istanbul to Hong Kong to New York, our liberation lies in building a mass, international Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and transforming the bosses' profit wars into class wars for communist revolution.

inter-imperialist rivalry is the name of the game

The U.S. bosses'-led liberal world order is in utter disarray (see page 2). To understand the driving force of world events, we must grasp the inter-imperialist rivalry which is becoming sharper. This means bosses who cut the world into spheres of influence are preparing for war with each other. Their struggle is intensifying, especially as U.S. imperialist influence around the world is stumbling.

As the biggest imperialists prepare their fight, they maneuver to gain advantage over their rivals. They fight to control as many second-tier countries as possible. But the bosses of these second-tier capitalist states have ambitions of their own. That's what's happening with Turkey.

Regardless of how the bosses' alliances shift over time, the result is that under capitalism workers will always lose.

Relationship with the West unravels

Turkey has been a member of NATO (the transatlantic alliance led by U.S. bosses) since 1952. Since the Cold War, its NATO base in Incirlik has played a key role in containing the USSR (and now Russia) and helping U.S. forces launch their murderous wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the Middle East. Turkey is deeply integrated into NATO's military structure. It hosts the standing headquarters for NATO's land forces in the city of Izmir.

When U.S. rulers tried to destabilize the Middle East with the Arab Spring, Turkey lost by backing the losing side, the Muslim Brotherhood. This isolated Turkey from the region, especially from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

The Syrian civil war was a direct result of the Arab Spring. The U.S. was incapable of achieving its objective of toppling Syrian ruler Bashar Assad, who was backed by Iran and Russia. Worse for Turkey, the U.S. allied with its enemy the YPG (Kurdish forces which Turkey categorizes as a terrorist organization). The Turkish and U.S. bosses' relationship has only continued to unravel.

Erdogan cuts deals with Russia

These developments encouraged an attempted military coup against Turkish President Recep Erdogan in 2016. Erdogan had been in power since 2003 and had been consolidating his control while transforming Turkey into a quasi-religious fascistic state. The coup was an opportunistic attempt by the military to be the ultimate power broker in Turkey, a role that they were accustomed to.

Erdogan survived and blamed the West. It also became fed up with the unfulfilled promises of EU membership. So, Turkey, in crisis and isolated, warmed up relations with Russia.

Erdogan's first call and foreign visit after the coup was Russia. Since then, Turkey and Russia have brokered the peace talks in Syria (Reuters, 12/16/16). Russia lifted most of the sanctions it had imposed on Turkey. They met seven times that year culminating with the sale of a Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile system to Turkey (CNN, 7/13/19).

Liberal Order sanctions Turkey

This dealing with Russia has its contradictions. Russian and Turkish troops still face one another not only in Syria, but on opposite sides of the Libyan civil war, and the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Turkey also has refused to recognize Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula (ABC News, 10/16/20).

Turkey continues to anger the EU by sending a research ship escorted by gunboats to prospect for gas in waters internationally recognized as part of the exclusive economic zones of EU members Greece and Cyprus (BBC, 10/12/20). It has weaponized refugees by busing hundreds to the Greek border and pushing them to cross in a bid to pressure the EU and Greece.

Last month, the U.S. Congress passed a law mandating the President to impose sanctions on Turkey for buying those Russian missiles (WSJ, 12/10/20). The EU is also debating sanctions against Turkey for its incursion into its maritime zone. These imperialists are sending a clear signal to Turkey to play by their rules. Joe Biden, representing the Big Fascists, is "willing to work with "opposition leadership" in [Turkey] to topple Erdoan in Turkey's 2023 elections" (Daily Sabah, 1/20).

U.S. at risk of losing Turkey to China?

Although China and Turkey have long been at odds over China's racist state terror against Uighur workers, in recent years the relationship has thawed. Since 2016, they have signed at least ten bilateral agreements, and China is now only second to Russia in trade with Turkey. While the U.S. bosses have railed against Chinese tech giant Huawei as a security threat, market share of the company in Turkey has only grown (Foreign Policy, 9/16/20). Militarily and economically, the U.S. bosses are losing serious ground.

Considering everything, this hornet's nest "risks bringing Turkey and the United States into a military confrontation, unheard of in their 70-year long alliance" (Brookings, 2/14/18). Biden's job, as dictated by the Big Fascists, is to prepare for eventual war against the U.S.'s rivals, China and Russia.

No honor among imperialist thieves

Communists know that the world's ruling capitalist classes are mass-murdering fascists and racists. They are only interested in maintaining their power and control over the world's resources and workers. They have no principles. They only use religion, patriotism, nationalism, identity politics, and sexism to divide and confuse workers to kill each other for their profits.

As such, their wheeling and dealing is all opportunistic and self-serving. They have no loyalty to each other. When the bosses talk peace, workers should prepare for war. We are the wild card in the rulers' games. These capitalist rulers are highly dynamic human actors interested in maximum profits. We need to understand their motives to prepare ourselves for battle.

This battle we're building right now must have no borders. Reject all bosses and their ideologies—turn imperialist war into class war and communist revolution with PLP!✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

No vaccine for the virus of capitalism

I read this article "Fighting Covid-19 with vaccines and communism" in the Dec 28, 2020 issue of CHALLENGE and discussed it with Progressive Labor Party healthcare workers in Chicago. I thought it was a good article but wanted to add some additional points.

Public health issues require a comprehensive response. The vaccine is just one piece of a larger response, but it is being promoted as the only solution to the pandemic. This isn't by accident. This framing of the vaccine as the only savior is purposeful to absolve the ruling class of responsibility. The government would rather frame the solution as a vaccine because it desperately wants to avoid getting to the root of the issue.

The inadequate public health infrastructure, poverty, racism, and capitalism all play a role in the pandemic. Workers will continue to be vulnerable to another pandemic if these issues aren't tackled. As the vaccine rolls out, the government and the bosses' media will praise the scientists but will also expand their praise to include capitalism. They'll try to claim that the free market has brought us the vaccine and saved us all. However, it was always capitalism that pushed the spread of Covid-19 by forcing people to work, gutting public services, and providing no safe alternatives to workers.

The state wants to limit the response to the pandemic to the narrowest terms possible. It wants to avoid giving people a stimulus, increasing spending on social services, mortgage/rent freezes, letting people out of prison, housing the homeless, etc. By only focusing on the vaccine, they get to avoid any responsibility in addressing these other issues. The effects of Covid-19 have touched every aspect of our lives and will continue to do so. Workers have lost jobs, been kicked out of their homes, and found themselves in a much more precarious situation because of the pandemic. A vaccine won't make up for lost time. Workers who have to bear the brunt of this pandemic may spend years trying to lift themselves back up even though they bear no responsibility for the inadequacies of the state. We should all be happy that there is a vaccine coming, but we can't let it become the sole focus of addressing the pandemic.

★★★★★

Working-class women gave leadership alongside Marx & Engels

I would like to add a few points to the recent article in CHALLENGE on Friedrich Engels' bicentennial.

Mary Burns, Engels' companion for 20 years until her death, was an Irish factory worker in Manchester who helped Engels research his 1845 book, The Condition of The Working Class in England, a brilliant expose of the terrible working and living conditions of the city's many factory workers. (Because of awful pollution and high infant mortality, the life expectancy for people born in Manchester was half that of those born in the nearby countryside.)

It's true, as the article says, that Engels did considerable reading for the book, but Mary Burns was his essential link to the lives of workers and their families, especially to Irish workers, who were the most exploited workers in England. It's doubtful that Engels' book would have been as powerful as it was without his being able to tour the working class slums and talk with people who lived there, with Mary as his guide.

Mary Burns died at the age of 41, probably of stomach cancer. Engels then lived for the next 15 years with Mary's sister, Lizzie, who he married on her deathbed. Engels said of Lizzie:

My wife was a real child of the Irish proletariat and her passionate devotion to the class in which she was born was worth much more to me – and helped me more in times of stress – than all the elegance of an educated, artistic middle-class bluestocking.

All the women in the families of Marx and Engels were politically active: Marx's wife Jenny and his three daughters Eleanor, Jenny, and Laura. Eleanor Marx, for instance, translated her father's books, co-wrote a book on the Paris Commune, and became a leader of the Socialist League.

A couple of years ago, the movie The Young Karl Marx came out. I watched it with a couple of friends who knew a lot about that history. We thought it was a very good movie. It covered the period from a little before Marx and Engels met until the completion of The Communist Manifesto. It shows their relationships with their loved ones and friends and their intense involvement in the working class struggles of the period. It has high production values and very good acting. I thought the film was accurate, politically instructive and fun! I highly recommend

★★★★★

Christmas a capitalist invention

Christmas is a religious holiday in which Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25. It comes from the Latin nativitas, nativa les, which means birth. In 1903, the academic F. G Kitton, stated in a writing that Charles Dickens was the one who really invented Christmas in 1843, and that he attracted the aristocracy and the middle class to that holiday.

Originally, the day is about pagan festivals that commemorated the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere. But in general after several generations it has become a culture for almost everyone meaning abundance, prosperity, fraternity, and solidarity.

In reality this is far from the truth. On the contrary, because capitalism is in crisis, the poorest workers cannot afford their ornaments, lights, gifts and tree. Although billions can barely eat for some years the Christmas fervor has grown stronger, and as early as November in many homes the ritual begins. The media at the service of the capitalists are in charge of rooting on this phenomenon and incite the workers to consume, and thereby the racist capitalist system has been able to profit by billions of dollars every year.

And it is that in the absence of class consciousness and a method of dialectical analysis that allows for analyzing phenomena, the working class will continue to be easy prey for any lie disguised as truth like this one.

It is up to the PLP to make every effort to clarify the truth of this phenomenon, extending dialectical materialism to our fellow workers as a tool of analysis so that we better understand this farce.

Glossary of communist political terms

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They have used open racism to build a political following.

Letter: Capitalist healthcare is a racist atrocity

It was interesting to hear about healthcare rationing in California and other states overwhelmed by Covid-19 infected patients. I was a respiratory therapist for over 40 years, and I recall healthcare rationing hospitals serving mostly Black & Latin communities on the south and west sides of Chicago for decades.

The main ways rationing is practiced in these working-class neighborhood hospitals is through lack of staff and supplies. In a large medical and trauma center in Oak Lawn, Illinois, where most of the patients are white, there were two respiratory therapists in the emergency room (E.R.), 24 hours a day. In one of the busiest trauma centers in Chicago, on the west side, a therapist would be assigned to cover one or two patient floors, in addition to the emergency room.

Many times, we were busy giving care on the patient floors, when we would have to stop and scurry to the emergency room for a trauma emergency. The patients on the regular floors were short-changed in their care, because we would be unable to be in two places at the same time. On many occasions, treatments could not be given because we were occupied attending to patients in the E.R. Still, in other instances, patients in the E.R. would be waiting for treatment while we attended to patients on the regular floors or other seriously ill patients in the E.R.

Lack of equipment was also a common problem. Many times I had to look for necessary equipment, like a flowmeter, used to deliver oxygen, or other equipment and supplies to set-up a ventilator used to help patients breathe.

The short staffing was not restricted to patient floors and the E.R. I'll never forget the night I had to take care of 11 patients who were all on ventilators in the intensive care unit. We had to keep track of our productivity during the 12-hour shift. On that night my productivity was over 20 hours, and this form of speed-up was not unusual. They stopped requiring us to track our productivity when it was obvious that all too often, we did more than 12 hours worth of work, and it became the basis for complaints.

The hospital's deliberate short staffing and lack of equipment serving mostly Black and Latin communities is racist health care. It leads to unsafe working conditions and substandard care or rationing. On the west side of Chicago, life expectancy is 69 years, while six miles away downtown, life expectancy is 85 years. This gap is a result of capitalist oppression of all workers, but especially of Black & Latin workers. Capitalists worship money and profits above workers' health, and systemic racism is their number one weapon to keep workers divided and keep society unequal.

We fought back with a petition that over 60 people signed, demanding more staff and better equipment. We were forced to use devices that were obsolete (spare parts were not being made for some breathing machines). The hospital bosses started a witch hunt to find the organizers of the petition. Instead being intimidated, many workers spoke up about the racist working conditions. We got more staff and new equipment, but like most reform victories under this system, it didn't last long. When workers left, they would not be replaced, and the equipment was not maintained by management.

Rotten healthcare is bad for patients and hospital workers. The Covid-19 pandemic further exposes capitalism's public health failures and gross racist inequities. Black workers make up 30 percent of the population in Chicago, but 72 percent of the reported Covid-19 cases. Black workers are seven times more likely to contract and die from the virus than other workers living in the same city. Structural and systemic racism kills.

We must fight back and build the Progressive Labor Party, because only communism can ensure a healthy future for our class.

PL'ers lit MLA convention with communist ideas

NEW JERSEY, January 10— As news was rolling in of the attempted Small Fascist-led takeover of the U.S. Capitol (see page 2), the Modern Language Association (MLA) was hosting its annual convention. The Radical Caucus of the MLA, in which Progressive Labor Party (PLP) has been active for many years, was preparing to confront how the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified the ongoing attacks on public higher education. The fightback among faculty and graduate students must now also confront the intensified political surveillance and ideological repression that are sure to shape teaching and learning in the humanities classrooms in the coming period.

Attack on faculty = attack on students

The crisis in higher education has been brewing for at least three decades. All the following attacks hurt students the most. Almost 75 percent of all courses are now taught by graduate workers and non-tenure track faculty. While administrators and athletic coaches rake in huge salaries, these teachers' pay is pitiful, usually without benefits or job security; some adjuncts are on food stamps and homeless, living in their cars. Thousands of adjuncts have been laid off because of pandemic-related cutbacks. Many full-time faculty have been forced to increase their workloads, spend many extra hours mastering online teaching, and in some instances take pay cuts. These attacks the faculty—adjunct and non-adjunct—attacks the quality of education for students.

Students who attend most institutions of public higher education—mainly working-class, immigrant, and/or Black or Latin—are shoved into bigger classrooms, often without rigorous instruction, and face costly, delayed graduation dates due to fewer classes being offered. Many colleges have turned into dystopian diploma mills, robbing students of quality education.

Organize with workers on campus

At the 2021 MLA convention, held online, the Radical Caucus organized two panels—one on "The Post-Pandemic University," one on "Climate Activist Pedagogies"—and held a well-attended meeting where anti-capitalist and pro-communist politics were prominent. There was frank discussion of the intimidation—and anger—experienced by teachers whose zoomed classrooms are subject to surveillance at any time.

Proposals were made to step up political work among graduate students, most of whom anticipate never getting a tenure-track job, as well as to organize antiracist campaigns uniting faculty with nonacademic campus employees, from janitors to food service workers.

Class consciousness vs. phony liberalism

Given the crisis in ruling-class legitimacy flowing from the failed Capitol invasion, the Radical Caucus must also step up the struggle on the ideological front. Most academics who devote their lives to the study of culture and literature do so out of humanistic impulses; they want to see a better world and are not trying to get rich.

But liberal ideas, which disempower effective fights against the capitalists, reign supreme. Marxist analysis of the grounding of consciousness in class-based social relations is often dismissed as "class reductionism." Identity politics—which posit that race, gender, and sexuality define what is essential in human experience—dominate most intellectual inquiry and attempts at campus organizing.

We can anticipate that liberal multiculturalism, the principal ideology embraced by the dominant sector of the U.S. ruling class, will now be promoted still more aggressively as the supreme expression of patriotism. The bosses turn the working class's instinct of antiracism and antisexism into tools for oppression. The Radical Caucus plans to sponsor a series of mini-conferences where certain keywords popular in liberal academic lingo—such as "intersectionality," "racial capitalism," "white fragility," and "racial privilege"—will be subjected to vigorous critique. All these terms distort the reality of class relations and make identities primary over class struggle.

This ideological offensive is especially important now as campus administrations are increasingly institutionalizing these concepts in the wake of the recent multiracial Black Lives Matter mass movements against racism.

PLP has a long history of working within the MLA Radical Caucus. We have consistently sponsored panels on working-class, antiracist, and antisexist literature. Starting in the 1980s, we have given strong class-conscious leadership to campaigns against academic racism, imperialist war, sweatshop labor, welfare cutbacks, anti-Muslim racism, and attacks on undocumented immigrants. We were the first force within the MLA to advocate on behalf of graduate student unionization and support for adjunct faculty. Largely because of our successes in getting resolutions through the Delegate Assembly, the MLA Executive Council changed the Constitution, so that it is now nearly impossible to bring forward rank-and-file resolutions and get them ratified by the membership.

To be self-critical: this barrier to the passage of resolutions led Party members in the last few years to be more passive in our MLA activity. But the current pandemic, intensification of class contradictions, and crisis in class rule have jolted us back into a renewed awareness of the need for militant Communist-led organizing among academics in the humanities. CHALLENGE readers, stay tuned for more from the red fighters in the MLA's Radical Caucus.✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Racist police terror uses false 'confessions'

NYT, 1/5 [Yusef Salaam, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana] — On Dec. 19, 2002, a judge vacated our convictions for the brutal attack on Trisha Meili,…the Central Park jogger….The lies that we were told by detectives to wrongly convict us were finally exposed …Now we are fighting to prevent others from facing the same fate.….In 1989, we were just boys — Kevin and Raymond were only 14 — and we came to be known as the Central Park Five. Now we are known as the Exonerated Five….

The methods that the police used to coerce us, five terrified young boys, into falsely confessing are still commonly used today….In that interrogation room, everything changes. During the hours of relentless questioning…detective lied us to repeatedly. They said that they had matched our fingerprints to crime scene evidence and…that the others had confessed and implicated us in the attack….that if we just admitted to participating in the attack, we could go home. All of these were blatant lies.

…Detectives sought to exhaust, disorient and confuse us…to make us so fearful of never seeing our loved ones again that we'd say anything to protect ourselves….

…The truth didn't matter….They locked onto one theory and were hellbent on securing incriminating statements to corroborate it and…secure our wrongful convictions….These deceptive tactics are 100 percent legal.

…False confessions played a role in nearly 30 percent of wrongful convictions….In New York State alone, 43 people who have been exonerated… were wrongly convicted based on false confessions….

U.S. Democracy is just an illusion

NYT, 1/11, (letter to editor) — Over…Wednesday's events, there has been much concern expressed over the world's eyes being on America….

Get over yourself, America. First of all, you are not the model of democracy at work, because you are not even a democracy. You are a republic slavishly clinging to a broken system that assures you will forever elect presidents and other representatives whose beliefs reflect a minority of the population. Your hypocrisy is laid bare at every turn, such as evangelicals who embrace guns and Donald Trump. There's your atrocious civil rights record that continues today with…the caging of children.

So rest assured, America, your status as a global role model is not at risk, because it was an illusion to begin with. — Brian Smith, Waterloo Ontario

U.S. racist history source vaccination doubts

New Yorker, 1/11 — Across Philadelphia, 2,450 people have died from Covid-19….47 percent of the dead are Black….It remains a disease that is killing African-Americans and Native Americans faster than others….Black people account for 18 percent of those who have died from Covid-19 complications, far higher than their 13 percent of the national population….

African-Americans have expressed the greatest skepticism about being vaccinated…[because of the] history of Black health care…replete with acts of cruelty and depravity and has caused Black communities…[to have] warranted suspicion. More important, racism in…medical treatment in the U.S. has tainted the ways that health-care professionals view Black suffering and symptoms….A 2016 study of more than 200 medicals students and residents found that half of them believed that there biological differences between Black and white people….. that Black people feel less pain than whitd people…. According to a 2015 study, Black youngsters experiencing acute appendicitis were "significantly" less likely to receive opioids than their white peers.

…The National Academy of Medicine…study, called "Unequal Treatment," found that "racial and ethnic minorities receive lower-quality health care than white people….[and] "some people in the U.S. were more likely to die from cancer, heart disease, and diabetes simply because of their "race" or ethnicity, not just…[from] lack of access to health care….The realities that Black people experience greater unemployment [and] are poorer…is corrosive in maintaining a good health-care regimen…. Many…delay treatment or ignore their health-care needs altogether because of the expense….These factors explain the greater vulnerability of African-Americans to the worst effects of Covid-19….Some of the most outrageous acts of medical abuse directed against Black communities have been orchestrated by state-led entities….

…There is an entirely separate history of local and federal officials sterilizing poor and working-class Black and Puerto Rican women….In the South Black women were routinely sterilized without their informed consent and for no valid medical reason...Between 1929 and 1974, North Carolina forcibly sterilized more than 7,000 women, 35 percent of whom were African-American….Between 100,00 and 150,000 women were being sterilized annually through federal funded programs. Half… were African-American.

…This kind of misogynistic barbarism… continu[ed] will into the 1980s, and were national...Other women were threatened with the loss of welfare benefits unless they submitted to state-sponsored sterilization….In 1983, Black women comprised only six percent of the population, but constituted 43 percent of women sterilize in federally-funded family-planning programs. The uncertainty surrounding the use of vaccine in Black communities…reflects a history of medical neglect and malpractice that continues to reverberate in contemporary health-care practices.

CAPITALIST INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM VS. COMMUNIST COLLECTIVE FREEDOM

Workers pay the heaviest of prices for buying into capitalist ideas, which in every country capitalism tries convincing us are universal truths— in the U.S., schools and movies alike saturate us with ideas like "individual freedom." But when evaluating the toll of COVID-19, the cost of these ideas is measured in the hundreds of thousands of workers dead and the millions of workers' lives uprooted and shattered in the U.S. alone: in the belly of the beast of history's richest and most powerful imperialist power.

And the very first mechanism by which capitalism guaranteed the lethality of the COVID-19 was the infection of the working class with capitalist ideas, starting with individualism.

To be sure, the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party recommends the COVID-19 vaccine, universal mask wearing, physical distancing, and self-isolation when necessary – to protect ourselves and everyone around us. These are common sense mandates. In many countries workers willingly obey these public health mandates and lockdown orders for that reason.

Yet the U.S. leads in the share of people who defy such public health measures. Many refuse to accept these mandates because they regard them as infringements on "individual freedom," even though this individualism directly harms others. Misled by politicians like Trump and Christian fascist preachers who promote superstition over science, around more than 25 percent of all U.S. workers —rising to 33 percent of Black and 34 percent of Latin workers— believe the pandemic is "probably or definitely" a hoax (Pew Research, 7/24/20), dismissing the one-third of one million deaths and counting. Far too many of our working class sisters and brothers are incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood.

Mimicking Trump's irresponsibility, many state governors and politicians aligned with the Small Fascist, domestic-oriented "Fortress America" capitalist wing tell people to do what they want. Many small-time capitalists are on the brink of failure, squeezed by monopolies like Amazon on one hand and falling profits on the other.

But it's not just Trump – it's capitalism. Such blatant "me-first" disregard for the well-being of others didn't begin with Trump or any particular faction of the capitalist class. It flows from the entire history and ideology of capitalism, from its early competitive days to today's monopoly capitalist stage, imperialism.

Politics are primary

Capitalism consists of a relatively tiny class of capitalists at the top: the owners of production and wealth. These capitalists control the lives of the rest of society beneath them—the working class, in countries the world over—control that they exercise through their state power, represented for them by self-serving politicians. And these politicians are (usually!) protected by the bosses' police and military.

These politicians are a key part of capitalist state power, along with the entire monopoly-owned mass media and educational institutions, who are all represented on think tanks like the Council on Foreign Relations. Capitalist state power is supported by and enhances individualism alongside racism, sexism and nationalism to weaken working class-conscious interests like equality, collectivity, internationalism and solidarity.

Communist collectivity vs capitalist individualism

Communist-led workers in China won a revolution and established socialism in 1949. For the period of time that the heroic struggles of workers in China were led by communists, many millions of workers became conditioned with a collective working class consciousness that opposed capitalist individualism.

These movements ultimately failed and came under the leadership of pro-capitalist, fake communists. The old communist movement, for so many achievements and advances, kept many capitalist ideas. They wrongly believed that the international working class could not be won directly to communism, and PLP has analyzed the lessons of these failures elsewhere.

Even so, remnants of that collectivity and solidarity persist. Russia and China have long ago betrayed revolutionary struggle and become fascist states today. And yet China's success in containing COVID-19 would've been impossible were it not for masses of workers selflessly volunteering.

The U.S. National Institutes of Health conducted a study on the "volunteerism" in China (Miao et al, 8/7/20). As the pandemic rose, 85,699 middle-aged worker volunteers interpreted and carried out public health mandates, as public services facing decades of China's capitalist cutbacks became overwhelmed. Volunteers formed grassroots networks connecting hard-hit cities like Hangzhou, Wenzhou and Taizhou with smaller cities, towns and villages, from running public services to organizing logistics for food and medicine deliveries, to performing invaluable sanitation duties.

Zero praise is due for the fascist "Communist" Party of China or their response to the pandemic; workers in China organized despite their fascist capitalist government, and the bosses found themselves tailing the masses. Tellingly, the survey found that 85.8 percent of these worker volunteers volunteered "on their own initiative," whereas 10.8 percent stated they were officially mobilized. Tragically, without a mass revolutionary communist party like PLP, these selfless worker volunteers saved lives, but also strengthened the hand of Chinese imperialism.

These volunteers' parents and grandparents would remember the 1960s when China was led by real communists. Communists organized and channeled working class consciousness to eradicate the disease schistosomiasis, caused by snail-borne parasites that the Centers for Disease Control lists today as both an indication of extreme poverty, and the deadliest of all tropical diseases. Communists mobilized millions collectively, and is documented in Joshua S. Horn's must-read book, Away With All Pests.

Forward to communism

"Personal choice" and "individual freedom," are illusions of capitalist ideology, stand in opposition to working class liberation, and under capitalism lead to death-dealing pandemics for which capitalist ideas also have no solutions. Capitalist individualism only tightens our chains. The international working class' historic task is therefore smashing capitalism and capitalist ideas through communist revolution and communist ideology.

Communism is a new concept of freedom—mass freedom. Where the condition for the free development of each is the free development of all, empowerment of the majority through abolition of the capitalist state, and organization of a working class dictatorship. This collective rule requires mutual responsibility, based on an objective and scientific appraisal of the needs of the global working class. Such an outcome is only possible through a mass organization of millions into PLP and encouraging the full participation of all workers in deliberating, planning, and implementing ideas.

Under communism, the collective power of the working class can be mobilized to solve any problem history and nature presents, from pandemics to crop failures to climate change. Liberating the creative power of each and every worker through communism and dialectical materialism will ensure the survival and progress of all. Join us and join the fight for freedom: to smash the ideological chains of individualism, racism and sexism with communist revolution. ✪

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